

## GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

April 24, 2015

The Graduate Council met at 2:00 p.m. in Ingram 101. Chair Nita Brooks presided.

### I. Call to Order

#### **Members present:**

Vaughn Barry, Carol Boraiko, Nita Brooks, Ginny Dansby, Kathleen Darby, Bichaka Fayissa  
Josh Howard, Robert Kalwinsky, Steve Livingston, Pamela Morris, Dwight Patterson, Lencie  
Plancher, Brian Robertson, Monica Wallace, Cliff Welborn, and Jeremy Winters

#### **Ex-Officio/ Guests present:**

Scott Handy, Interim Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies,  
Jackie Eller, Interim Dean, College of Graduate Studies and Vice Provost for Research

### II. Announcements

#### a. **Dr. Nita Brooks, Chair**

Dr. Brooks opened the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

#### b. **Dr. Jackie Eller, Interim Dean, Graduate Studies**

Dr. Eller extended a thank-you to all members for their service this year. She also informed Graduate Council that current admission numbers are down and denials are up, although likely only half of the applications have been received and encouraged everyone to continue reviewing applicants throughout the summer.

#### c. **Dr. Scott Handy, Interim Associate Dean, Graduate Studies**

Dr. Handy provided an update on TBR and THEC approvals, including new programs (M.S. in Finance, Master's in Library Science, Master of Arts in Liberal Arts) and extensively revised programs (Healthcare Informatics, MBA, and M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction in Elementary Education).

### III. Approval of Minutes from last meeting – March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

The minutes were distributed to the Graduate Council for review. A motion was made to accept the minutes of the March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

### IV. Sub-Committee Reports

#### a. **Graduate Faculty and Curriculum Review**

##### **Dr. Vaughn Barry, Chair**

- The April Consent Calendar is attached.
- The Consent Calendar comes in the form of a motion. It was seconded and passed.

#### b. **Student Affairs and Travel**

##### **Dr. Kathleen Darby, Chair**

- This sub-committee is asked to review scholarship applications with Melissa Hawkins and will meet in the near future to select recipients.

c. **Policies and Procedures**

**Dr. Bichaka Fayissa, Chair**

- A request for a policy regarding termination of Graduate Faculty status for various types of misconduct was considered. The sub-committee could not arrive at a consensus regarding this policy or even the need for such a policy. After considerable discussion regarding the implications of such a policy, who would make these decisions, and how this might impact the salary status of certain faculty, it was thought that this topic requires much more thorough consideration and that it will be considered further in the future as a more general system for suspension of graduate faculty status for faculty who fail to maintain the defined levels of activity and scholarship required for the granting of this status. At the present time, the issue was tabled.

d. **Graduate Program Review**

**Dr. Ginny Dansby, Chair**

- Summaries of the MSE and MOBI 5-year reviews were presented. No surprising results were observed in either review. The key reviewers' points in the MSE program (curriculum revision, new recruitment strategies, and follow-up with graduates) are all actively under consideration by the program, with timelines for implementation. For the MOBI program, the review response indicates that the key points (curriculum revision, executive committee, and external advisory board) are achievable, but there is less demonstration of active buy-in and the program has not seen the reviewers' report.

V. **Old Business**

- a. English Language Proficiency Data. After a presentation of the actual numerical impact of raising standards on international admission (summary attached) and the observation that this impact would not be detrimental to any one particular program (at most 5 or 6 students in any one program, and varying by year), a motion was made to raise the English Language Proficiency Standards of the College of Graduate Studies to 550, 79, and 65 for the paper-based TOEFL, internet-based TOEFL, and IELTS respectively. These values reflect the average of our peer institutions and come endorsed by our English language preparation partners (ELS and IEI). The motion was seconded and passed. This proposed increase in standards will now be forwarded to the Admissions and Standards Committee at Middle Tennessee State University.
- b. Graduate Forms Approval. The wording of this item was clarified as requested at the last Graduate Council meeting. The Graduate Faculty status and Curriculum Cover Memo forms will be revised to include a signature line for the program coordinator/director (the two terms being used largely interchangeably) that will be before the Department Chair signature line. These will be the only two forms changed. The purpose of this additional signature is to ensure that Graduate Program Coordinators are involved in graduate program matters, particularly in cases in which the Department Chair is either not Graduate Faculty or not actively involved in the graduate program. One remaining question - the home department of the faculty would have to be clarified (the one in which they have been hired, tenured, and/or

promoted for faculty who do teaching across disciplines and programs such as those in the MBA, MSE, MOBI, COMS, etc.) remains to be clarified.

VI. **New Business**

- a.* Summer Graduate Council. The proposal for the creation of a summer Graduate Council to handle emergency business and graduate faculty status applications (attached) was presented. A question was raised as to whether Graduate Council was actually a year-long commitment, but just never had sufficient members in the summer to be effective, and thus if this proposal was even necessary. It was decided that this proposal should be considered regardless to provide a mandate for its creation. A motion was made to approve the proposal and have a sign-up sheet at the next Graduate Council meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.
- b.* Graduate Faculty and Student Travel Budget. Given that this account regularly runs out of money, a request was made for the Student Affairs and Travel sub-committee to consider formally restricting this account to fund only student travel, with requests for faculty travel going instead to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Vice Provost for Research for funding through alternative mechanisms. At present, roughly 25% of the funded requests are from faculty, a level that could be accommodated by these alternative funding sources. In combination with a requested increase in the student travel account, it is anticipated that student travel could be completely (or nearly completely) funded.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m. The next Graduate Council meeting is scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

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## Graduate Council – Consent Calendar April 24, 2015

### Graduate Faculty Membership

#### Adjunct

Jeremiah Busch / Biology / PhD  
Linda Gilbert / Education / EdD  
Elowin Harper / Human Sciences / MA  
Fekri Hassan / History / PhD  
Alaa el-din Shaheen / History / PhD

#### Full

Frank Bailey / Biology / PhD  
Nate Callender / Aerospace / PhD  
Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand / Philosophy / PhD  
Tony Johnston / Agribusiness and Agriscience / PhD  
Adrian Mayse / Accounting / PhD  
Sandra Poirier / Human Sciences / EdD  
Michael Rutledge / Biology / EdD  
Chris Stephens / Mathematical Sciences / PhD  
James Tate / Psychology / PhD

### Graduate Curriculum Changes

#### *Recording Industry*

##### Proposed New Course

MRAT 6155 Analog Recording, 3 credit hours, effective Fall 2015

#### *Educational Leadership*

##### Other

Changes to be effective Fall 2015

- COUN 6810 Adult Counseling --- Update the Catalog Description to reflect adding “permission of department”.
- COUN 6765 Diagnosis & Treatment Planning --- Update the Catalog Description to reflect adding “permission of department”; remove prerequisites “PSY 3230/PSY 5230 and COUN 6270” to be replaced with “an undergraduate course in abnormal psychology”.
- COUN 6610 Introduction to Counseling Research --- revise catalog description
- COUN 5655 Foundations of Clinical Mental Health Counseling --- Update the Catalog Description to reflect adding “permission of department” and removing prerequisites “PSY 1410 and PSY 3230 or equivalent”; revise wording in catalog description.
- COUN 6540 Internship: Clinical Mental Health Counseling --- revise catalog description and number of internship hours required

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## *History*

### **Proposed New Courses**

HIST 6940/7940 History Abroad, 1-3 credit hours, effective Fall 2015

## *Accounting*

### **Inactivation of Courses**

ACTG 6000 Survey of Accounting Principles, effective Fall 2015

BLAW 6430 Legal Environment of Management, effective Fall 2015

## *Computer Science*

### **Non-Substantive Revisions in Curriculum of Existing Major, Minor, Emphasis**

Change the prerequisites for CSCI 6330 (Parallel Processing Concepts)

**FROM** CSCI 3240 or CSCI 3250 or CSCI 6050

**TO** (CSCI 3130 and either (CSCI 3240 or CSCI 3250)) or CSCI 6050, effective Fall 2015

## *Criminal Justice Administration*

### **Reactivation of Course**

CJA 6830 Violence and Victimology, effective Fall 2016

## *Political Science*

### **Course Title Changes**

Changes to be effective Fall 2015

PS 5690 Change the title **FROM** "Comparative Foreign Policies and International Relations of the Middle East"  
**TO** "International Relations of the Middle East"

PS 6220 Change the title **FROM** "International Development"  
**TO** "Seminar in International Development"

English Language Proficiency Material

Term	Total Graduate Enrollment	Total International Admits	New International Enrolled	New International Enrolled Below Proposed
201480	2,467	211	85	23
201380	2,719	135	57	27
201280	3,023	166	91	22

Maximum number below in any one program is 5-7 (and that is in larger programs such as the MBA and Information Systems, so there would be no danger to the program). Also, in some programs, this loss could be off-set by other students who might require assistantships but do not receive them because they were offered to these students with low English proficiency standards. Regardless, this increase would not be expected to compromise any of our programs.

MSTU Graduate Council  
Graduate Program Review Subcommittee Report  
April 24, 2015

Subcommittee Members:

Virginia Dansby, Chair  
Carol Boraiko  
Lencie Plancher

**Graduate Program Review Subcommittee's Report to Graduate Council on the Mathematics and Science Education (MSE) Ph.D. Program Review and Recommendations**

Prepared by Virginia Dansby

The Graduate Program Review Subcommittee has been provided with the following reports:

- The MSE Ph.D. Program Self Study Report, 2014-2015, which was completed and signed by the Angela Barlow, Director of the MSE Ph.D. Program, and Robert Fischer, Dean of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, on December 14, 2014.
- The External Program Review Narrative, which was completed by Drs. Robert Reyes, University of Missouri, and Dana Zeidler, University of South Florida, on March 9, 2015, following their February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> site visit.
- The Departmental Response to the review which was prepared by Dr. Barlow.

The External Program Review Narrative provided comments on these two strengths:

- Collaborative preparation of manuscripts
- Collaborative preparation of grant proposals.

It provide recommendations in the following five areas:

- Widening Program Perspective
- Faculty Issues
- Programmatic Issues
- Recruitment Issues
- Support Issues

The reviewers also completed a Program Review Summary Sheet for Graduate Programs in which they rated many categories as "good" or "excellent." They also rated many areas as "minimally acceptable," but none as "poor."

Dr. Barlow's Departmental Response addressed issues raised in the Summary Sheet and the Narrative. She pointed out some inconsistencies and misinformation in the reports, supplied a rationale and information regarding areas where she disagreed with the reviewers' rating of "minimally acceptable," and provided information on actions that are being taken to correct some of the areas that the MSE faculty agrees to be strengthened. She also addressed recommendations and included the following list of activities (in priority order) required to implement the recommendations:

### Program-level activities

1. Curriculum - Our top priority is curriculum revision in relation to the core knowledge of mathematics and science education as well as the core knowledge within each concentration (biology education, chemistry education, interdisciplinary science education, and mathematics education).
2. Follow-up with graduates – To support continuous program improvement, it is necessary to develop a means for systematically gathering feedback from our graduates.
3. Recruitment – Moving forward, we must develop a plan for recruiting students into the program that focuses beyond our immediate geographic borders.

### College/university-level activities

1. Workload – The current workload form does not align with the needs of a doctoral program. Specifically, attention should be given to the workload credit that faculty receive as they work with doctoral students through directed research hours, dissertation hours, formal mentoring, etc.
2. Faculty – Additional faculty are needed to support students in the program. In particular, immediate needs are new hires that should include a chemical educator and at least two mathematics/science educators placed in the College of Education.
3. Secretarial support – The program's need for secretarial support should be addressed.

The Response also included a table for the program-level activities. See attached.



Middle Tennessee State University  
 Graduate Program Review Progress Report  
 Actions Planned to Address Reviewer's Recommendations

Program: Mathematics and Science Education Ph.D. Program

Recommendation	Action	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Responsible Individual(s)	1-Year Progress
Curriculum – Core Knowledge of Mathematics and Science Education	Identify the core knowledge of mathematics and science education to be developed in students; develop the necessary course proposals to address this core knowledge; revise the degree plans.	2015 – 2016 academic year	\$0	MSE Coordination Committee	
Feedback from Program Graduates	Develop an online survey for graduates to complete; develop a protocol for conducting exit interviews and/or focus groups with students in their last semester of the program	2015 - 2016	\$0	MSE Coordination Committee	
Recruitment	Develop marketing materials, including flyers and video; re-purpose the MSE website as a recruiting tool; utilize conference presentations and colleagues as a means for recruiting	2015 – 2016 and ongoing	- Money for travel to conferences; - Money for creation of professional video	MSE Coordination Committee	

MSTU Graduate Council  
Graduate Program Review Subcommittee Report  
April 24, 2015

Subcommittee Members:

Virginia Dansby, Chair  
Carol Boraiko  
Lencie Plancher

**Graduate Program Review Subcommittee's Report to Graduate Council on the program reviews and recommendations - Molecular Biosciences (MOBI) Ph.D. Graduate Program**

Prepared by Carol Boraiko

The Graduate Program Review Subcommittee has been provided with the following reports:

- The MOBI Self-Assessment Study, prepared by committee members Norma Dunlap, Department of Chemistry; Anthony Farone, Department of Biology; Rebecca Seipelt-Thiemann, Department of Biology; and Director, Elliot Altman, Department of Biology
- Molecular Biosciences (MOBI) Ph.D. Graduate Program External Review Evaluation Report, submitted on March 10, 2015, by P. Shing Ho, Ph.D., Colorado State University, and John H. Nilson, Ph.D., Washington State University
- The Departmental Response to the External Review prepared by Elliot Altman

Note, the program review is very rambling, I have copied some and summarized the rest.

**Issue with review – From the dept:** I was quite disappointed by the narrow mindedness of the external reviewers. Instead of comparing our program to all of the programs in molecular biosciences across the US, they only compared our program to the programs they are associated with at Colorado State University and Washington State University. Our program is closer to the majority of programs that are implemented throughout the US, which do not use the rigid structures that the programs at Colorado State University and Washington State University employ.

Significant suggestions recommended by the external reviewers:

- 1- Overhaul the curriculum,
- 2- Establish an Executive Committee and
- 3- Establish an External Advisory Committee.

- 1- Overhaul the curriculum
  - a. If the new laboratory skill courses suggested by the reviewers are implemented, the cost will be \$40,000 for supplies
- 2- Establish an Executive Committee
  - a. This task can be completed in one year
- 3- Establish an External Advisory Committee
  - a. This task can be completed in one year

From the Reviewers:

The overall impression from the two-day visit is that MOBI has very successfully completed its 5-year probationary period. It has:

- Garnered significant administrative and financial support from the University to support its faculty, students, and function;
  - Is housed in an impressive new science building that both supports the two participating departments and fosters the interdisciplinary nature of the MOBI;
  - The program and the sciences are strongly supported by a very good library system that provides both in-house and electronic resources that are important for research and student training;
  - Recruited a total of 35 enthusiastic and well-spoken Ph.D. students;
  - Supports the training of Ph.D. students by 29 members of the MOBI faculty;
  - Started to graduate a reasonable number of Ph.D. students over this 5 year period;
- The national average for students graduating from Ph.D. programs in molecular biosciences is 6.7 years. Our first five students graduated in an average of 4.4 years. I think this accomplishment merits the use of a more descriptive adjective than "reasonable".
- Seen a significant increase in external funding, including grants from the NIH and the NSF; and
  - Attracted several younger members to its faculty with strong interests in establishing research programs at the Ph.D. level, while maintaining the core teaching mission of the University.

The Departmental Response included a table for the program-level activities. See attached.

Middle Tennessee State University  
 Graduate Program Review Progress Report  
 Actions Planned to Address Reviewer's Recommendations

Program: Molecular Biology Ph.D. Program

Recommendation	Action	Timeframe	Estimated Cost	Responsible Individual(s)	1-Year Progress
Overhaul the curriculum		one year	If the new laboratory skill courses suggested by the reviewers are implemented, the cost will be \$40,000 for supplies	Elliot Altman	This task can be completed in one year
Establish an Executive Committee		one year	\$0	Elliot Altman	This task can be completed in one year
Establish an External Advisory Committee		One year	\$0	Elliot Altman	This task can be completed in one year.

## Proposal for the Creation of a Summer Graduate Council

The College of Graduate Studies requests the creation of a small summer Graduate Council for the purposes of handling routine business and the rare extraordinary situation that might arise, thereby alleviating the back-log that exists at the beginning of each Fall term and permitting the College of Graduate Studies to continue to conduct official business.

### Composition:

5 voting members from those serving on Graduate Council during the prior Spring term, ideally distributed across different departments/programs/colleges at MTSU.

### Duration of Service:

Members may volunteer for 1-3 of the summer months as their schedule and availability permit.

### Method of conducting business:

E-mail will be the primary means of communication, with face-to-face meeting only if necessary. Decisions upon Graduate Council items will be made by 4 P.M. of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of June, July, and August with information to be considered being available on D2L the previous Friday.

### Business to be handled:

It is anticipated that the primary business of the summer Graduate Council will be review and approval of graduate faculty status requests. A few simple curriculum items (such as new course proposals or inactivations) may also be considered if there is a pressing time constraint. Major items, particularly those involving off-campus action such as program development, revision, and policy considerations will be deferred until the following Fall term unless there is an extraordinary need.